

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 1551**

**Introduced by Assembly Member Kehoe**

February 21, 2003

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An act to add Article 3 (commencing with Section 9700) to Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Division 3 of the Unemployment Insurance Code, relating to employment.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1551, as introduced, Kehoe. Employment: biotechnology employment and development.

Existing law provides for the establishment of various job training programs, administered by the Employment Development Department.

This bill would set forth legislative findings and declarations that the San Diego biotechnology industry increasingly needs more biotechnology professionals of all levels that are familiar with industry-like conditions for basic, applied, and translational research, training, and production, as provided. This bill would also state legislative findings and declarations that the San Diego Multiuse Biotechnology Training Center is being created to serve as an anchor and catalyst for the growth of biotechnology enterprise in the region, and to address the workforce needs of the biotechnology industry.

This bill would additionally authorize various state and local entities, as specified, to enter into memoranda of understanding with the center to provide services, funding, and personnel, as provided.

This bill would make legislative findings and declarations as to the necessity of a special statute.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Article 3 (commencing with Section 9700) is  
2 added to Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Division 3 of the Unemployment  
3 Insurance Code, to read:

4  
5 Article 3. San Diego Multiuse Biotechnology Training Center  
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7 9700. For purposes of this article, “center” means the San  
8 Diego Multiuse Biotechnology Training Center.

9 9701. (a) The Legislature finds and declares the following:

10 (1) Biotechnology represents one of the most promising,  
11 innovation-based growth industries of this era. California is the  
12 nation’s leading state in biotechnology innovation and production.

13 (2) The San Diego region, as the world’s third largest  
14 biotechnology industry cluster, is host to world-class generators of  
15 science and technology in biotechnology and the related life  
16 sciences.

17 (3) Despite the specialized nature of emerging biotechnology  
18 firms, their recent growth has been extensive, and with that growth  
19 has come an ever-increasing demand for trained biotechnology  
20 workers at all levels. The industry’s workforce has grown at an  
21 annual rate of about 15 percent over the past five years, and  
22 California’s biotechnology workforce could easily grow to over  
23 250,000 by the year 2015 from its current level of 100,000.

24 (4) Biotechnology employers need entry-level and advanced  
25 professionals that have a background in, and familiarity with,  
26 industry-like conditions for basic, applied, and translational  
27 research, development, and production. Based on recent studies,  
28 there is a clear and strong demand for applied bioscience training,  
29 but that demand is currently not being met by the region’s  
30 universities and colleges.

31 (5) Companies nationally have overwhelmingly endorsed an  
32 “industry-focused” approach of providing internship training  
33 programs directly with the companies, combined with  
34 “company-like” training activities.



(6) Many firms have identified the difficulty in finding entry level biotechnology workers at both the graduate and undergraduate levels as being directly related to the students' lack of applied industry training or exposure. Many firms have had to extensively train new employees to teach them how to function in a biotechnology business environment. Additionally, nearly three-fourths of firms surveyed in San Diego and nationally have indicated that they would benefit from being able to hire workers that have been prepared to enter the workforce through advanced biotechnology internships and training of a "specific" nature.

(7) San Diego and the surrounding area is served by many well-recognized academic institutions, from community colleges to universities offering doctorate programs, that supply educated workers to the biotechnology industry. At each academic level (AA, BS/BA, MS/MA, Ph.D.) curricula are in place, but most of the curricula are only marginally related to biotechnology workforce preparation in the applied sector. Applied education in the form of internships or instruction in practical science skills that would smooth the transition from academic institutions to the commercial biotechnology environment is even less prevalent than the biotechnology curricula offered at many schools, and is only now just emerging.

(8) Many of California's firms have found that many students graduate from four-year university programs with adequate conceptual understanding of biotechnology, but with relatively little practical laboratory experience, especially in the skills and protocols that are specific to commercial ventures as opposed to academic research.

(b) The Legislature further finds and declares that to address workforce needs in biotechnology, a multiuse biotechnology training center is being created in San Diego to serve as an anchor and catalyst for the growth of biotechnology enterprises in San Diego. The center will operate as a nonprofit organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and will serve as a catalyst for accelerating the growth and formation of new bioscience enterprises that will create value-added jobs and high economic multipliers in the San Diego region. For this purpose:

(1) The center will provide state-of-the-art, industry-oriented bioscience training and act as a strong contributor to the growth and retention of bioscience companies in the region. As such, the

1 center, as proposed, will help encourage biotechnology companies  
2 to remain in the region, thereby offsetting the pull of other, less  
3 expensive business environments that have been recruiting both  
4 startup and existing local area bioscience companies.

5 (2) The new center will serve as a world-class biotechnology  
6 workforce training facility offering practical, hands-on learning  
7 experiences, including short-term workshops and courses, and  
8 more extended training that will involve putting together  
9 multidisciplinary, multilevel teams of researchers, technicians,  
10 production specialists, apprentices, and students to work in a  
11 business-like environment.

12 (3) The center will coordinate an extensive applied  
13 biotechnology internship program that will place students in local  
14 biotechnology companies for practical training and experience.

15 (4) The center will have the most relevant and advanced  
16 training possible, including an emphasis in bioinformatics, that  
17 will ensure that the center attains a position at the forefront of this  
18 rapidly expanding, cross-application specialization within  
19 biotechnology.

20 (5) The center will have facilities and a collection of  
21 instruments not generally available to the region's secondary  
22 schools, colleges, or universities.

23 (6) The center can serve as a capstone training site for regional  
24 institutions.

25 (7) The center will address the needs of existing as well as  
26 future industry employees.

27 9702. The San Diego Community College District, California  
28 State University, University of California, Employment  
29 Development Department, Employment Training Panel,  
30 California Health and Human Services Agency, California  
31 Workforce Investment Board, and the San Diego Workforce  
32 Partnership may enter into memoranda of understanding with the  
33 center to provide any of the following:

34 (a) Funding, if moneys are appropriated.

35 (b) Staff.

36 (c) Program development.

37 (d) Outreach.

38 (e) Coordination.

39 (f) Implementation.

40 (g) Strategy.

1 (h) Physical office, administration, and training space.

2 SEC. 2. The Legislature finds and declares that a special law  
3 is necessary and that a general law cannot be made applicable  
4 within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV of the California  
5 Constitution because the unique geographic, demographic, and  
6 commercial dynamics in the San Diego region are especially  
7 conducive to innovation and production in the biotechnology  
8 industry and provide a unique opportunity to implement and refine  
9 possible solutions to improving the education and training of the  
10 biotechnology workforce, in a manner that would encourage  
11 biotechnology companies to remain in, and migrate to, the region  
12 to the benefit of the economies of the San Diego region and the  
13 entire State of California.

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